

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PM-04

NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

SSC-01 PRS-01 /061 W

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FM AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 414

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L VICTORIA 332

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP,PINT,PINS,,SE,US

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT RENE

REF: A) BAKER-MATTSON JUNE 13 TELCON

B) STATE 133577

C) STATE 135806

1. SHORTLY AFTER REF TELCON, BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER PUGH INFORMED ME THAT HE HAD BEEN ADVISED BY FCO THAT UK "IS SET TO RECOGNIZE" RENE'S GOVERNMENT. HE SAID HE HAD MADE 10:00 APPOINTMENT WITH RENE TO ADVISE HIM THAT HIGH COMMISSIONER WAS NOW ABLE TO RESUME FULL RANGE OF DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS AND ACTIVITIES WITH THE SEYCHELLES GOVERN-

MENT. I THEN REQUESTED AN APPOINTMENT WITH RENE WHICH WAS FIXED FOR 11:30

2. DRAWING ON GUIDANCE IN REFTELS, I TOLD RENE I HAD INSTRUCTIONS AUTHORIZING ME TO RESUME NORMAL RELATIONS AND FULL RANGE OF CONTACTS WITH SEYCHELLES GOVERNMENT. RENE SPECIFICALLY ASKED ME IF MY STATEMENT CONSTITUTED RECOGNITION BY U.S. AND I REPLIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH FINAL SENTENCE PARA 2 REFTEL B. MY RESPONSE SATISFIED RENE AND CONVERSATION DRIFTED EASILY INTO OTHER AREAS
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3. IN EXTREMELY CORDIAL AND RELAXED 45 MINUTE PRIVATE MEETING, RENE MADE FOLLOWING POINTS IN ADDITION TO QUESTION OF AGREEMENT AND INDEPENDENCE SHIP VISIT (REPORTED VICTORIA 330 AND VICTORIA 331).

A. BACKGROUND ON COUP D'ETAT-RENE BRIEFLY RETRACED ALREADY

FAMILIAR GROUND OF HIS DISCONTENT WITH MANCHAM'S DECISION TO POSTPONE ELECTIONS. HE ALSO CLAIMED THAT RECENTLY MANCHAM HAD BECOME "SOMEWHAT MENTALLY UNBALANCED" AND WAS MOVING TOWARD ESTABLISHMENT OF DICTATORSHIP.

B. EXTERNAL THREAT-RENE SAID HE HAD EVIDENCE THAT MANCHAM AND HIS FORMER SDP MINISTERS IN LONDON WERE CONTINUING TO PLOT AGAINST NEW GOVERNMENT. HE SAID RECRUITMENT EFFORT WAS BEING ORGANIZED AMONG LARGE SEYCHELLOIS STUDENT COMMUNITY IN UK AND THAT 30 SEYCHELLES PASSPORTS HAD BEEN STOLEN FROM HIGH COMMISSION. (IMPLICATION WAS PASSPORTS COULD BE USED TO INFILTRATE MERCENARIES). CREATION OF PEOPLE'S MILITIA WAS FOR DETERRENT EFFECT DURING PRESENT UNSETTLED PERIOD. RENE STATED THAT CASUALTIES IN COUP WERE THREE DEAD, TWO SLIGHTLY WOUNDED.

C. DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION-IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, RENE SAID NEITHER SOVIET UNION NOR PRC HAD YET RECOGNIZED NEW SEYCHELLES GOVERNMENT. HE SAID BOTH CHARGES HAD TOLD HIM LAST WEEK THAT THEY HAD TO AWAIT INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTHING FURTHER HAD BEEN HEARD FROM THEM.

D. FUTURE BILATERAL RELATIONS-RENE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WHICH HAS CHARACTERIZED US-SEYCHELLES RELATIONS IN THE PAST WOULD CONTINUE. HE TOLD ME HE WOULD ALWAYS BE AVAILABLE IF I HAD ANYTHING TO DISCUSS DIRECTLY WITH HIM AND INVITED ME TO "FEEL FREE" TO BE "FRANK AND CRITICAL" WITH HIM IN ALL OUR FUTURE MEETINGS.

E. MANCHAM STATEMENT TO LONDON PRESS-TOWARD END OF MEETING, I CONFIDENTIAL

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MENTIONED JUNE 6 LONDON TIMES ARTICLE WHICH REPORTED MANCHAM'S STATEMENT THAT I HAD WARNED HIM "TROUBLE WAS AHEAD." HE IMMEDIATELY DISMISSED MANCHAM REMARK AS "INCONSEQUENTIAL" AND, WITH A SMILE TOLD ME HE HAD TOLD MANCHAM "TROUBLE WAS AHEAD" SEVERAL MONTHS AGO IF HE CONTINUED TO PURSUE SAME POLICIES.

4. RADIO SEYCHELLES HAS JUST MADE FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT:
"AMERICAN SHARGE D'AFFAIRES, GREG MATTSON, CALL ON THE PRESIDENT THIS MORNING AND INFORMED HIM THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT REQUESTED THAT NORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BE RESUMED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES."

(THE WORD RECOGNITION WAS NOT MENTIONED).

5. COMMENT: DESPITE MOMENTOUS EVENTS AND WEEK OF FRENZIED ACTIVITY, RENE APPEARED AS RELAXED, REFLECTIVE AND CONFIDENT AS EVER. IF HE FEELS TRULY THREATENED BY PLOTTING AGAINST HIM BY MANCHAM, HIS CONCERNS ARE WELL CONCEALED.
MATTSON

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Sent Date: 13-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
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